

## Martlesham Parish Council, Annual Parish Meeting April 20th. 2022

### Report from Ian O'B. Baker, Chairman Recreation and Amenities Committee (R&AC)

During the last year the Committee has, as usual, been busy. There have been a number of large projects and numerous medium to small. But I must say that ALL the projects are as important as each other. No matter what size they are they all add to better Parish for all of us.

We have gone out to tender during last year for our maintenance contract. During September we sent out a number of the Tender Documents to various contractors. I must add that due to Covid -19 the previous contract had been extended to 7 years. So, three councillors and the Clerk had spent several hours updating the contract. The contract was awarded to Messrs. S.C. L. Ltd. (Simon Cox Landscape) who were our existing Contractors (up to 31st March 2022). The contract is for 3 years (1st April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025) with a possible 2-year extension.

We granted funds of approx. £38k for the purchase of play equipment for the Harry Higgins Play Park beside the Pavilion on Martlesham Heath. £18,200 of this came from the Community Infrastructure Levy, received because of new development. I think that the new equipment is fantastic and the number of items which can be used by disabled youngsters and equipment which helps with physical improvement is outstanding.

Talking of development there was Community Money when Travis Perkins developed their Builders Merchants site. The Parish Council have for many years been spending money on the Martlesham Common Local Nature Reserve. (From Felixstowe Road to Community Hall/Tesco's Car Park to A12 to Main Road). The work is undertaken by the Greenways Project, headed by James Baker, he has drawn up a management plan for 5 years using the money from T/P (approx. £24k). We know that this will help with biodiversity and the environment and make the whole area a wonderful place to see nature at its best.

We have two excellent Tree wardens who have taken over after the death of our long time and marvellous tree warden Cllr. John Forbes who was very ably helped by his wife Margaret. John retired from the Parish Council in early 2020 and in his and Margaret's honour we planted a Copse of trees on the Recreation Ground named the 'The Forbes Copse'. We have checked trees after the gales and have worked on Silver Birches on the Jubilee Play Area. We will be planting a Queens Celebration Oak on Kronjis Piece for the Platinum Jubilee. We are always planting and maintaining trees on Parish Council Land as an ongoing project.

There are numerous working groups of the Parish Council reporting to the R&AC. I have tried to list them with a brief description of the areas they cover.

**Community Orchard.** We have now made two plantings over the last two years. The third planting in early 2023 is well in hand. There is an army of volunteers watering the trees.

**Play Spaces.** We own 3 play equipment areas: Kronjis Piece in The Street, Jubilee area behind Carol Avenue including the Diamond Jubilee bike trails, the Parish Council owns the land in both these locations, Centenary Playspace on the Western Corridor, where we have an agreement with M.H.H.L. for the site, and we look after a fourth site, Harry Higgins Play Park, for the Pavilion Management Committee.

**Sports Fund Working Group.** This group was set up to deliver projects with the funds received from the Mill Heath development. An upgrade to the Jubilee Play Equipment has been progressing with adjacent to it a new all-weather sports surface (19m x 8m) with 2 stand-alone football goals and 2 cantilever basketball posts and hoops. The group also keep an eye on the Trim Trail etc.

I need to note here that all the play equipment is inspected weekly by volunteers both Parish Councillors and non-Parish Councillors, with a report being sent to the Clerk each time.

**Kronjis Piece and Recreation Ground.** There is a steering Committee who are actively looking at all aspects of this open space. Apart from general upkeep of the areas they are looking at sensory planting area and upgrade to the entrance track and Car Park.

**Wildflower Project.** They keep us up to date and work on all wildflower aspects and the late mowing of area including verges to all wildflowers to make a comeback.

**The Martlesham Wombles** A small group look after a part of the Parish to keep it clear of litter.

As I hope you can see we have a really good workload and helpers. We would like to fill the four vacancies we have on the Parish Council. Over the years I have not found being a Parish Councillor an onerous task. You would serve for 1 year as there are elections in 2023. That one year would give you a good insight into the work of the Parish Council.

M. Ian O'Brien Baker,  
Chair, Martlesham Parish Council Recreation and Amenities Committee